GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3907
ANSWERED ON:21.04.2008
LICENCES FOR TELECOM SERVICES
Patle Shri Shishupal Natthu;Pingle Shri Devidas Anandrao;Thummar Shri Virjibhai;Vasava Shri Mansukhbhai D.

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has received applications from private sector new telecom companies for seeking Landline/Mobile telephone Licences to start telecom services in the country;

(b) if so, the number of companies granted licence alongwith the circles for which said licences have been granted during the last three years, as on date alongwith the reason for cancellation of their applications;

(c) whether the Government has not issued licence to other company under the influence of certain private telecom operators so as to save them from competition;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether the Government has conducted any inquiry to remove this apprehensions in this regard;

(f) if not, the reaction of the Government thereto;

(g) whether there is a proposal to make local calls in all circles at the rate of 25 paise per minute as reported in Dainik Jagran, dated March 6, 2008;

(h) if so, the details thereof; and

(i) the time by which call rates are proposed to be reduced?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI JYOTIRADITYA M. SCINDIA)

(a) Yes, Sir. Government has received applications from private sector companies for grant of Unified Access Services (UAS) licences in various service areas in the country which includes wireline and wireless access services.

(b) to (f) 143 new UAS licences have been granted to 20 companies in 22 service areas during last three years. New UAS licences have not been issued to the companies who did not fulfill the eligibility conditions of UASD guidelines dated 14.12.2005 for grant of UAS licence. Out of the 143 new UAS licences, 120 licences have been issued recently in February-March, 2008 to 16 companies adding 4 to 7 new telecom service providers in 22 service areas in the country. This will result in enhanced competition in the telecom sector. Certain applicant companies, who did not fulfill the eligibility criteria and were not granted UAS licences, have approached courts and the matters are subjudice.

(g) to (i) Tariffs for the telecom services in the country are governed by the frame work laid down in the Telecommunication Traiff Order (TTO), 1999 as amended from time to time by Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI). As per the existing provisions of TTO, Traiff for telecom services are under forbearance except with regard to fixed line service in rural areas, national mobile roaming service and leased line service. The service providers have the flexibility to offer lower call charges.